

opened for occupancy a housing project, the Frances Plaza Apartments, on which most of this money was spent, furnishing excellent accommodations at low cost to fifty families of his race. "Modern in every respect, the apartments are equipped with air conditioning, playground, lawns and a fountain, playrooms in the basement for the children, a gymnasium and bowling alley, reception hall for social affairs, and a chapel for religious services." The chairman of the Philadelphia Housing Authority is quoted as saying that the building is a good business proposition as well as a meritorious slum-clearance project. In further justice to the relief client who invested first foolishly in a sweepstakes ticket and then wisely in a housing project, it should be added that he has paid back \$3,000 which he had received for relief, and that when he bought an automobile (as of course he did) it was one of the cheapest on the market. The only particular moral of this story is its suggestion that it seems to be entirely practicable to do something about slum-clearance and better housing at low cost, given a reasonable sum of money, from whatever source derived, and a simple and sincere desire to do it.

## No Kingdom of God For Connersville

**P**REACHING the Kingdom of God on earth constitutes advocacy of the "overthrow of the government by war" in the opinion of the authorities of Fayette county, Indiana. On Palm Sunday the sheriffs of that county rounded up and jailed seventy-five Jehovah's Witnesses in Connersville. They were distributing their literature which proclaims a "theocracy in which God shall be the supreme ruler." Although bail was at first set at the historic total sum of \$225,000, it was later reduced so that the Witnesses are now at liberty awaiting trial for sedition. The Connersville authorities are pressing their charges under the Indiana criminal syndicalism law. This statute is so loosely drawn that last September it enabled them to send two elderly housewives, also Witnesses, to the penitentiary for terms of from two to ten years for "seditious conspiracy" and "resistance to organized government." What they had actually done was to distribute the literature of the sect—a right specifically upheld by the United States Supreme Court—and to refuse to salute the flag. Although they are also free on bail pending appeal and the American Civil Liberties Union has intervened in both cases, such a display of official tyranny and intolerance as this is a disgrace to democracy and a menace to the freedom of all religion. Liberty of belief under the Constitution is not only for the wise, the tolerant and the respectable. If it has any meaning at all—and it does—it implies liberty for fools, bigots and crackpots, provided they confine their activities to preaching and do not step over the line into overt disturbance of the peace. Prosecuting these harmless but pestiferous people, Connersville advertised their absurd ideas and exposed its own ignorance to national opprobrium. It has also shown the danger of savagery which is likely to become increasingly common as war hysteria spreads across the country. The responsibility for this situation, which is only a part of the

most widespread religious persecution which this country has known for a century, lies with the fomenters of war madness.

## London's City Temple Is in Ruins

**M**ANY an American heard the news of the bombing of City Temple, in London, with a degree of emotion disproportionate to his own actual association with it. This was the most prominent non-conformist church in London. Built in 1874, its pulpit immediately became the central broadcasting station (before there were any broadcasting stations in the modern sense) for British free church opinion. It was from that pulpit that Joseph Parker—the Henry Ward Beecher of London, unless one prefers to call Beecher the Joseph Parker of Brooklyn—polysyllabically damned the sultan for permitting the massacre of the Armenians. In less sensational ways he made this pulpit a religious lighthouse in the metropolis. Reginald J. Campbell sent out a light of a different hue but of no less brilliance. Joseph Fort Newton is the only American who was ever the minister of City Temple, though many of the greatest American preachers have spoken from its pulpit. Frederick W. Norwood's ministry there was long and memorable. Leslie D. Weatherhead, who succeeded him five years ago, has been widely heard and his books on religion and on psychology have been widely read. For Protestant American visitors to London, City Temple has been one of the first places of pilgrimage and one of the places where they were most certain to meet their friends. It was a great parish church, but it had also something of the character of a cathedral. It was the St. Paul's of non-conformity. And now it has been bombed to dust and ashes. Fortunately, as one thinks of it now, the building made no great architectural pretensions. It was just a house to hold a worshiping congregation. The spirit of the church was so much more significant than its edifice, that perhaps one should think of the destruction wrought by the bomb as an inconvenience rather than a disaster.

## Have You Put in Your Order for a Bomb?

**A**LL THE THRILLS of the most spectacular form of battle lust are now to be available to Americans who are "spoiling for a fight" but are kept safely at home by prudential or financial considerations. British bomb manufacturers, according to *Newsweek*, are organizing in this country a group called Bombardiers, Ltd. The purpose of the new organization is to sell options on aerial bombs of various weights. These options are then to be turned over to the Royal Air Force, which agrees to air mail to the holder of the option a letter informing him of the time and place when his bomb is put to use. Obviously this noble idea is only in the early stages of its development. Think how much greater the propaganda value if the bomb-purchaser, in addition to his certificate of ownership, could be given a motion picture showing the whole history of his investment. The film could show the



bomb being made, being loaded on the plane, being flown through the night to its target. Then a magnificent shot could picture the fulfillment of its mission—"like a rose of flame," said Mussolini's son of the bombs he dropped on herdsmen's huts in Ethiopia. But why stop there? With a little assistance from the ministry of information, close-ups might be shown of the workingman's home which happened to be hit instead of the military objective. It might even be possible to picture people digging in the ruins. A satisfying final close-up could be provided of the death certificates of the Hun and all his family, since it would probably not be wise to show mangled bodies. Then imagine the sound effects! The roar of motors, the shriek of flames, the screams of the dying—all available on film strips to those who buy enough bombs. Then what a pleasant entertainment to call in one's friends for an evening of home movies and run the film while sitting safe and snug on this side of the Atlantic.

## An Unfounded Fear

MINISTERS of the United Church of Canada were recently circularized by a letter written on the stationery of the General Council of the United Church, soliciting subscriptions to a new periodical, then about to be published in the United States. The letter was signed by Rev. Dr. Gordon A. Sisco, secretary of the council, and was accompanied by a prospectus of the new publication. As to the propriety of this apparently official action, The Christian Century has no right to an opinion. The message of the letter, however, is one that concerns the churches on both sides of the unguarded boundary which separates our two countries.

"Some of us," the letter begins, "have been deeply concerned over the confused leadership given by certain liberals in the Christian churches in the United States during the present crisis. We have recognized that such leadership threatens not only the capacity of the Christian church to give adequate and realistic moral guidance and inspiration now and in the post-war period, but also the continuance of the good relations which should exist between the churches of the United States and Canada." The letter refers to this as a "menace," and states that this "menace" is felt by the editors of the new publication no less than by its Canadian promoters.

No doubt both the zeal and the fears of the church headquarters which sponsored this letter were overstimulated by the prevailing war psychology. That there is always peril of division or alienation when the church confronts a war situation is obvious. This is one of the curses of war. But that there exists in the present situation any such menace as is described in the above clause which we have italicized, we do not believe. It is regrettable that, in the name of "good relations" between the churches of Canada and the United States, any attempt should be made to create an actual danger by exaggerating its possibility.

That there is a difference of conviction in American

church leadership is frankly recognized. This does however, threaten the unity and fellowship of the churches in America. Why should it threaten the gracious fellowship and the sense of solidarity which has grown up between the American and Canadian churches?

The divergence of view within the churches of our country primarily concerns the foreign policy of the United States. Canadian policy is not involved. As for American churchmen there are none who presume to take an opinion as to Canada's duty in relation to the war to express the slightest hint of disapproval of her participation in it. Canada's duty is for Canadians to decide. America's duty is for Americans to decide. Their respective duties may be identical; but again they may be different. Some among us believe they are identical. Others among us hold that they are not. Those who take the latter position hold that this is not America's war. They do not so much as raise the question whether it is Canada's war. They understand and profoundly sympathize with the historical presuppositions which took Canada into the war.

But the United States is not Canada. Our decisions must take account of a past, a present and a future which are our own, and not Canada's; just as Canada must take account of a past, a present and a future which are her own and not ours. Those who oppose American belligerent participation in the war do so for various reasons, but the Christian opposition rests upon the conviction that such participation not only lacks political justification, but would have consequences far worse for the world than if the war had been brought to a conclusion by the forces directly involved in it. But this divergence of view among American churchmen does not threaten the unity of the church in the United States. Why, then, should it be a "menace" to the good relations of the churches on the two sides of our invisible boundary?

Upon one fundamental purpose the churches of the United States are resolutely agreed, namely, that the issue shall not be the cause of further division among the churches or of their alienation from the churches of other countries. This holds true even with respect to the churches of other countries whose political order and whose military actions our country has already gone to great lengths to resist. The leadership of American Christianity, in its various forms and file membership, and its united expression in its organs as the Federal Council of Churches and the United Methodist Council of Churches has repeatedly declared that the church must ride the present storm without rupture of the body of Christ or poisonous infection of its fellowship.

That this will be a task of vast difficulty, there can be no doubt. But its accomplishment will be seen as a glorious triumph of the spirit and power of Christ when the tensions and distresses have passed and the churches stand anew the tremendous responsibility of bearing a collective and united witness amid the chaos which the war will leave in its wake. We believe that the same actuates the Canadian churches. And we call upon them as we call upon ourselves and our own churches, to resist every impulse which assumes that division of conviction concerning the war must spell estrangement within the fellowship of Christ.

As there is no disposition on the part of Amer-